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Invention: MULTI-LEAF PAGE FOR MOUNTING SUBSTRATE ARTICLES

Inventor (s): HALL, Tobianne Kae
COLLINS, Bryan P.

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SPECIFICATION

MULTI-LEAF PAGE FOR MOUNTING SUBSTRATE ARTICLES

Field of the Invention

[0001] The present invention relates to pages for mounting substrate articles, and particularly to a multi-leaf page for mounting substrate articles.

Background of the Invention

[0002] In recent years, scrapbooking has become an increasingly popular hobby. Typically, scrapbooking entails the making of a page or a series of pages in which substrate articles (e.g., photographs, stickers, invitations, etc.) are mounted. Most scrapbookers go to great lengths to decorate such pages and add a “personal touch” to their work.

[0003] One problem that is encountered by novice or infrequent scrapbookers, however, is the design and creation of a general layout for a scrapbook page. A typical scrapbook layout includes a base leaf, an intermediate leaf, and a top leaf. The scrapbooker will usually cut a pair of aligned windows through the top and intermediate leaves so that a substrate article mounted on the base leaf can be viewed through these windows. These aligned windows are usually the “main” window in which the centerpiece substrate article is located. Also, the user will typically cut at least one additional window in the top leaf, and possibly the intermediate leaf, under which a secondary substrate article (oftentimes a title block, for example) can be mounted. After these windows have been cut into the top and intermediate leaves, then the scrapbooker will often embellish the imperforate regions of the top leaf, and possibly exposed imperforate regions of the intermediate leaf if sections of the top leaf have been cut-out, by mounting additional substrate articles, die cutting, applying paint, etc.

[0004] The problem with this approach is that the scrapbooker typically spends a large portion of his/her time laying out and cutting the windows. When cutting the windows, care must be taken that aligned windows in the separate sheets are cut neatly to ensure they align properly when the page is assembled. For many scrapbookers, however, the fun of scrapbooking is the selection and mounting of the substrate articles, the later embellishment steps, and the appreciation of the final products.

[0005] Thus, the one aspect of this application has recognized that it would be beneficial to provide a page which can be used for scrapbooking wherein the work involved with cutting the typical main and secondary windows is eliminated, and the scrapbooker can focus on the more enjoyable aspects of his/her project. Another aspect of the invention has recognized that it

would be beneficial to provide a scrapbook with adhesive thereon for bonding the leaves of the page together upon completion of a project.

Summary of the Invention

[0006] One aspect of the present invention relates to a multi-leaf page for mounting substrate articles. The multi-leaf page comprises a base leaf, a top leaf, and an intermediate leaf positioned between the top leaf and the base leaf. The base leaf, the intermediate leaf, and the top leaf are arranged in overlying parallel relation and are joined together at edges thereof such that the leaves can be pivotally separated from one another to enable the substrate articles to be mounted therebetween. The top leaf and the intermediate leaf include a pair of aligned windows for enabling a substrate article to be mounted to the base leaf and exposed through the aligned windows. The top leaf has an additional window formed therein in spaced apart relation from the aligned windows for enabling an additional substrate article to be mounted beneath the top leaf and exposed through the additional window. The base leaf, the intermediate leaf and the top leaf are of essentially the same size and external peripheral shape such that the leaves are essentially coextensive with one another in the overlying relation. The top leaf, the intermediate leaf and the base leaf have imperforate regions overlying one another where no windows are formed in any of the leaves. The overlying imperforate regions enable a user to selectively cut the imperforate region of the top leaf to form a user-cut window exposing a portion of the imperforate region of the intermediate leaf, or selectively cut the imperforate regions of both the top leaf and the intermediate leaf to form aligned user-cut windows exposing the base leaf.

[0007] Another aspect of the present invention relates to a method of using a multi-leaf page. The page comprises a base leaf, a top leaf, and an intermediate leaf positioned between the top leaf and the base leaf. The base leaf, the intermediate leaf, and the top leaf are arranged in overlying parallel relation and are joined together at edges thereof such that the leaves can be pivotally separated from one another to enable the substrate articles to be mounted therebetween. The top leaf and the intermediate leaf include a pair of aligned windows for enabling a substrate article to be mounted to the base leaf and exposed through the aligned windows. The top leaf has an additional window formed therein in spaced apart relation from the aligned windows for enabling an additional substrate article to be mounted beneath the top leaf and exposed through the additional window. The base leaf, the intermediate leaf and the top leaf are of essentially the same size and external peripheral shape such that the leaves are essentially coextensive with one another in the overlying relation. The top leaf, the intermediate leaf and the base leaf have imperforate regions overlying one another where no windows are formed in any of the leaves.

The overlying imperforate regions enable a user to selectively cut the imperforate region of the top leaf to form a user-cut window exposing a portion of the imperforate region of the intermediate leaf, or selectively cut the imperforate regions of both the top leaf and the intermediate leaf to form aligned user-cut windows exposing the base leaf. The method comprises: with the top leaf and the intermediate leaf pivotally separated from the base leaf, mounting a substrate article to the base leaf such that the mounted substrate article will be exposed through the aligned windows upon pivoting the leaves back into the overlying parallel relation; with at least the top leaf pivotally separated from the base leaf, mounting an additional substrate article to one of the base leaf and the intermediate leaf such that the mounted substrate article will be exposed through the top leaf's additional window upon pivoting the leaves back into the overlying parallel relation; selectively cutting at least the imperforate region of the top leaf to form a user-cut window; and pivoting the leaves back into the overlying parallel relation.

[0008] Yet another aspect of the invention relates to a multi-leaf page with adhesive for securing two or more of the leaves together. The multi-page leaf comprises a base leaf, a top leaf, and an intermediate leaf for positioning between the top leaf and the base leaf. The top leaf and the intermediate leaf including a pair of windows positioned to be aligned when the top leaf and the intermediate leaf are arranged in overlapping relation. This enables a substrate article to be mounted to the base leaf and exposed through the aligned windows. The base leaf, the intermediate leaf and the top leaf are of essentially the same size and external peripheral shape such that the leaves are essentially coextensive with one another in the overlying relation. Adhesive is provided on one or more of the leaves for bonding at least two of the leaves together in the overlying relation. A release liner releasably covers the adhesive and can be removed from the adhesive for exposing it to enable the adhesive to be used for the aforesaid bonding.

[0009] Other aspects, features, and advantages of this invention will become apparent from the following detailed description when taken in conjunction with the accompanying drawings, which are part of this disclosure and which illustrate, by way of example, the principles of this invention.

Brief Description of the Drawings

[0010] The accompany drawings facilitate an understanding of the various embodiments of this invention. In such drawings:

[0011] Fig. 1 is a top view of a multi-leaf page constructed in accordance with an embodiment of the invention for mounting substrate articles;

- [0012] Fig. 2 is a top view illustrating a top leaf of the multi-leaf page shown in Fig. 1;
- [0013] Fig. 3 is a top view illustrating an intermediate leaf of the multi-leaf page shown in Fig. 1;
- [0014] Fig. 4 is a top view illustrating an imperforate base leaf of the multi-leaf page shown in Fig. 1; and
- [0015] Fig. 5 is a perspective view of the multi-leaf page shown in Fig. 1 with a substrate article being mounted thereto.

Detailed Description of the Illustrated Embodiment

[0016] Figs. 1-5 illustrate a multi-leaf page 10 constructed according to an embodiment of the present invention. In the illustrated embodiment, the multi-leaf page 10 is used for mounting substrate articles (e.g., photographs, stickers, invitations, etc.) for use in a scrapbook or album. As will be further discussed, the multi-leaf page 10 provides pre-fabricated windows that enable substrate articles to be mounted to the multi-leaf page 10 and exposed through a respective window. Also, the multi-leaf page 10 provides imperforate regions that enable a user to selectively cut and form user-cut windows for mounting additional substrate articles and adding personal artistic touches.

[0017] As used herein, the term “pre-fabricated” means that the feature is embodied in the multi-leaf page 10 prior to delivery to or purchase by the end-user. Thus, the pre-fabricated windows mentioned above are formed in the multi-leaf page 10 prior to the end-user obtaining the multi-leaf page 10 and starting a project with the same.

[0018] As best shown in Figs. 2-5, the multi-leaf page 10 includes an imperforate paper base leaf 12, a top paper leaf 14, and an intermediate paper leaf 16 positioned between the top leaf 14 and the base leaf 12. The base leaf 12, intermediate leaf 16, and top leaf 14 are arranged in overlying parallel relation and are joined together at edges thereof such that the leaves 12, 14, 16 can be pivotally separated from one another in an unfolding manner to enable substrate articles 18 (see Fig. 5) to be mounted therebetween. This joining is done prior to delivery or purchase by the end user and thus is part of the pre-fabrication of the page 10. Preferably, the paper used is relatively stiff. Alternatively, other materials, such as plastic, or combinations of materials may be used.

[0019] As used herein, the term “imperforate” means lacking pre-fabricated windows, but is intended to encompass windowless leaves with holes for mounting, such as holes for a 3-ring binder. Thus, the imperforate base leaf 14 would be considered a base leaf lacking pre-

fabricated windows, but also allows for the presence of some holes, such as for mounting to binder rings.

[0020] In the illustrated embodiment, the base leaf 12, the intermediate leaf 16, and the top leaf 14 are of essentially the same size and external peripheral shape such that the leaves 12, 14, 16 are essentially coextensive with one another in the overlying relation. Specifically, the leaves 12, 14, 16 have a general square shape with top edges 20, bottom edges 22, left side edges 24, and right side edges 26 (as viewed in Figs. 1-5). However, the leaves 12, 14, 16 may have any other suitable shape, e.g., rectangular, circular, etc. Also, it is contemplated that the leaves 12, 14, 16 may have different sizes and different shapes with respect to one another.

[0021] As shown in Fig. 5, the leaves 12, 14, 16 are joined together along the left side edges 24 thereof. However, the leaves 12, 14, 16 may be joined together along any other suitable edge, e.g., top edges. Also, the leaves 12, 14, 16 may be joined together at different edges from one another. For example, the top leaf and the intermediate leaf may be joined together at one edge, e.g., left side edges, and the intermediate leaf and the base leaf may be joined together at another edge, e.g. right side edges.

[0022] The leaves 12, 14, 16 may be joined together in any suitable manner. For example, in one embodiment, the leaves 12, 14, 16 are joined together at edges thereof with an adhesive. Alternatively, the leaves 12, 14, 16 may be joined together by mechanical fasteners.

[0023] In the illustrated embodiment, the top leaf 14 includes a window 28 formed therein by a reciprocating die cutter or a rotary cutter and the intermediate leaf 16 includes a window 30 also formed therein by a reciprocating die cutter or a rotary cutter. The pair of windows 28, 30 are aligned for enabling a substrate article to be mounted to the imperforate base leaf 12 and exposed through the aligned windows 28, 30. In the illustrated embodiment, the windows 28, 30 are generally square-shaped and positioned at a lower portion of the top leaf 14 and intermediate leaf 16, respectively. Moreover, the intermediate leaf's aligned window 30 is configured smaller than the top leaf's aligned window 28 with an internal peripheral edge 32 of the intermediate leaf's aligned window 30 extending inwardly adjacent and along an internal peripheral edge 34 of the top leaf's aligned window 28. This arrangement defines an internal border 36 along the internal peripheral edge 34 of the top leaf's aligned window 28. However, the aligned windows 28, 30 may have any suitable shape and may have any suitable size, e.g., similar sizes, with respect to one another.

[0024] For example, the window in the intermediate leaf 14 may be configured larger than the window in the top leaf 12. This alternative arrangement, while uncommon, would

allow the user to create a different effect, such as die-cutting the top leaf 12 in the area over the edge of the intermediate leaf's window, so that both the intermediate and base leafs can be seen, separated by the edge.

[0025] In the illustrated embodiment, the top leaf 14 has additional windows formed therein by die cutting in spaced apart relation with the aligned windows 28, 30 for enabling additional substrate articles to be mounted beneath the top leaf 14 and exposed through the additional windows. Specifically, the top leaf 14 includes an additional window 38 that is aligned with an additional window 40 formed in the intermediate leaf 16 in spaced apart relation from the aligned windows 28, 30 to define a second pair of aligned windows 38, 40 for enabling an additional substrate article to be mounted on the base leaf 12 and exposed through the second pair of aligned windows 38, 40. In the illustrated embodiment, the additional windows 38, 40 are generally rectangular-shaped and positioned at an upper portion of the top and intermediate leaves 14, 16 generally vertically aligned with respective windows 28, 30. The additional windows 38, 40 have similar sizes so no internal border is defined along the internal peripheral edge of the top leaf's aligned additional window 38. However, the intermediate leaf's aligned additional window 40 may be configured smaller than the top leaf's aligned additional window 38 to define an internal border along the internal peripheral edge of the top leaf's aligned additional window 38.

[0026] The top leaf 14 also includes a second additional window 42 formed therein in spaced apart relation from the windows 28, 38 for enabling a second additional substrate article to be mounted beneath the top leaf 14 and exposed through the second additional window 42. Specifically, the second additional window 42 has a generally vertically extending rectangular shape and is positioned on a right side of the windows 28, 38. The second additional window 42 in the top leaf 14 overlies an imperforate region 44 of the intermediate leaf 16 for enabling an additional substrate article to be mounted to the intermediate leaf 16 and exposed through the second additional window 42.

[0027] Further, the top leaf 14 includes several smaller additional windows formed therein for enabling several additional substrate articles, such as title blocks, to be mounted beneath the top leaf 14 and exposed through respective additional windows. Specifically, the top leaf 14 includes an elongated vertically extending window 46 on a left side of the windows 28, 38. Also, the top leaf 14 includes upper and lower windows 48, 50 on opposite sides of the second additional window 42. These additional windows 46, 48, 50 overlie imperforate regions

52, 54, 56 of the intermediate leaf 16 for enabling additional substrate articles to be mounted to the intermediate leaf 16 and exposed through respective additional windows 46, 48, 50.

[0028] The top leaf 14, the intermediate leaf 16, and the base leaf 12 have imperforate regions 58, 60, 62, respectively, overlying one another where no windows are formed in any of the leaves 12, 14, 16. The overlying imperforate regions 58, 60, 62 enable a user to selectively cut the imperforate region 58 of the top leaf 14 to form a user-cut window exposing a portion of the imperforate region 60 of the intermediate leaf 16. Also, the overlying imperforate regions 58, 60, 62 enables a user to selectively cut the imperforate regions 58, 60 of both the top leaf 14 and the intermediate leaf 16 to form aligned user-cut windows exposing the base leaf 12.

[0029] It is noted that the entire base leaf 12 is illustrated as being imperforate, and this region 60 occupies the entire leaf 16. For certain effects, the base leaf 16 may have some openings formed therein in certain instances.

[0030] The imperforate regions 58, 60 may be selectively cut by the user with a hand-held or desktop die cutter or scissors, for example. With die cutters, different shapes and letters may be cut out to embellish the imperforate regions. For example, the die cutter may be structured to cut shapes such as stars, animals, flowers, letters, etc. to expose a part of a leaf underneath the top leaf 14 (this is often done where the top leaf 14 is a different color from the other leaves so that the part exposed through the top leaf 14 stands out due to the color contrast). Alternatively, the user may simply draw or paint directly on the imperforate region 58 of the top leaf 14, or apply stickers or labels to the same.

[0031] The leaves 12, 14, 16 may be formed of any suitable material, e.g., paper, posterboard, cardboard, etc. Also, the leaves 12, 14, 16 may have any suitable color. In the illustrated embodiment, the base leaf 12, top leaf 14, and intermediate leaf 16 have different colors from one another. However, the leaves 12, 14, 16 may have similar colors.

[0032] In the illustrated embodiment, the leaves 12, 14, 16 have a width of about 12" and a length of about 12". The window 28 of the top leaf 14 is square-shaped with about 4½" sides, and the window 30 of the intermediate leaf 16 is square-shaped with about 4¼" sides. The additional windows 38, 40 in the top leaf 14 and intermediate leaf 16 have a width of about 1¾" and a length of about 4½". The second additional window 42 in the top leaf 14 has a width of about 4" and a length of about 6". Also, the elongated vertically extending window 46 in the top leaf 14 has a width of about 1½" and a length of about 10½". The upper and lower windows 48, 50 in the top leaf 14 have a width of about ½" and a length of about 4". However, the sizes noted above of the leaves 12, 14, 16 and the windows therein are only exemplary and not

intended to be limiting. To the contrary, the leaves 12, 14, 16 and the windows therein may have any suitable size and shape. For example, the leaves may have a standard paper size, e.g., 8½" by 11" or A4.

[0033] With respect to the imperforate regions of the leaves, 12, 14, 16, the imperforate regions 58, 60, 62 overlying one another have a size that is bounded by the windows 28, 30, the additional windows 38, 40, the second additional window 42, and the elongated vertically extending window 46. In the illustrated embodiment, the imperforate regions 58, 60 of the top and intermediate leafs 14, 16 have a width of about 4¼" and a length of about 5½" and overlie one another. The imperforate regions 44, 54, 56 of the intermediate leaf 16 are positioned on the right side of the windows 30, 40 and lie underneath windows 42, 48, 50 of the top leaf 14. In the illustrated embodiment, the imperforate regions 44, 54, 56 have a width of about 5" and a length of about 12". The imperforate region 52 of the intermediate leaf 16 is positioned on the left side of the windows 30, 40 and lies underneath window 46 of the top leaf 14. In the illustrated embodiment, the imperforate region 52 has a width of about 2½" and a length of about 12". However, the sizes noted above of the imperforate regions are only exemplary and not intended to be limiting. To the contrary, the imperforate regions may have any suitable size and shape.

[0034] Preferably, these imperforate regions are at least 1 inch in height, length, and/or width, and may be smaller or much larger.

[0035] Also, the multi-leaf page 10 illustrated includes three leaves, i.e., a base leaf 12, a top leaf 14, and an intermediate leaf 16. However, it is contemplated that the multi-leaf page 10 may have any other suitable number of leaves, e.g., four leaves.

[0036] The method of using the multi-leaf page 10 will now be described in greater detail. In use, the user may pivotally separate the top leaf 14 and the intermediate leaf 16 from the base leaf 12. With the top leaf 14 and the intermediate leaf 16 pivotally separated from the base leaf 12, the user may mount a substrate article 18 to the base leaf 12 such that the mounted substrate article 18 will be exposed through the aligned windows 28, 30 upon pivoting the leaves 12, 14, 16 back into the overlying parallel relation (e.g., see Fig. 5).

[0037] Also, while the top leaf 14 and the intermediate leaf 16 are pivotally separated from the base leaf 12, the user may mount an additional substrate article to the base leaf 12 such that the additional substrate article will be exposed through the second pair of aligned windows 38, 40 upon pivoting the leaves 12, 14, 16 back into the overlying parallel relation.

[0038] Then, the user may pivotally separate the top leaf 14 from both the intermediate leaf 16 and the base leaf 12. With the top leaf 14 pivotally separated from both the intermediate

leaf 16 and the base leaf 12, a substrate article may be mounted to the imperforate region 44 of the intermediate leaf 16 such that the substrate article will be exposed through the second additional window 42 formed in the top leaf 14 upon pivoting the leaves 12, 14, 16 into the overlying parallel relation.

[0039] Further, while the top leaf 14 is pivotally separated from both the intermediate leaf 16 and the base leaf 12, the user may mount additional substrate articles to the imperforate regions 52, 54, 56 of the intermediate leaf 16 such that the substrate articles will be exposed through the smaller additional windows 46, 48, 50 formed in the top leaf 14 upon pivoting the leaves 12, 14, 16 into the overlying parallel relation.

[0040] The substrate articles may be mounted to the base leaf 12 and intermediate leaf 16 in any suitable manner, e.g., by applying a permanent or repositionable pressure-sensitive adhesive to the back surfaces of the substrate articles prior to mounting the same. Also, an adhesive may be provided on the base leaf 12 and intermediate leaf 16 for purposes of holding a substrate article thereto.

[0041] Additionally, the user may selectively cut at least the imperforate region 58 of the top leaf 14 to form a user-cut window. As discussed above, the user may selectively cut the imperforate regions 58, 60 of both the top and intermediate leaves 14, 16 to form aligned user cut windows that will expose the base leaf 12 upon pivoting the leaves 12, 14, 16 back into the parallel overlying relation. Alternatively, the user may selectively cut the imperforate region 58 of only the top leaf 14 to form a user-cut window exposing a portion of the imperforate region 60 of the intermediate leaf 16. The user may selectively cut the imperforate regions 58, 60 in any suitable manner, e.g., die cutting, scissors, etc. With die cutting, the user may use a die cutter that is structured to cut shapes such as stars, animals, flowers, letters, etc.

[0042] Finally, the user may pivot the leaves 12, 14, 16 back into the overlying parallel relation, whereby the multi-leaf page 10 may be inserted into a scrapbook or album, for example.

[0043] The method of making the multi-leaf page 10 may include cutting each of the leaves with a reciprocating die cutter to form all the windows at the same time in the respective leaf, and then joining the leaves 12, 14, 16 together along the edges thereof, e.g., with an adhesive. Alternatively, the leave may be cut in a rotary cutting operation. For example, a rotating drum may rotate to repeatedly cut leaves.

[0044] An advantage of the multi-leaf page 10 is that the leaves 12, 14, 16 are pre-cut and pre-joined together to achieve a matted effect with accessibility to all leaves 12, 14, 16 for

the purposes of scrapbooking, for example. This provides an aesthetic design and layout in a clean, professional, matted effect without the need to cut, layer, and coordinate individual leaves.

[0045] As an optional feature, the surfaces of the leaves 12, 14, 16 may be provided with adhesive for facilitating securing the leaves together. Preferably, such adhesive would be covered by a release liner that covers the adhesive until the liner is peeled off of it. For example, adhesive deposits 80 may be provided along the free edges on both sides of the intermediate leaf 16 and covered by individual release liners. The individual release liners could be peeled off by the end user and then this adhesive would be used to bond the leaves together by virtue of bonding the top and intermediate leaves to the respective opposing sides of the intermediate leaf. This adhesive, irrespective of which leaf it is provided on, is preferably provided on one, more than one, or preferably all the free edges to facilitate accurate alignment of the leaf edges during bonding. Such adhesive could be formed continuously (such as a strip running along the free edges of a leaf) or provided in spaced apart applications (such as the deposits shown at 80).

[0046] In the illustrated embodiment, the multi-leaf page 10 would primarily be used for scrapbooking. However, the multi-leaf page 10 may be easily translatable into card making and other paper crafting projects. Also, the multi-leaf page 10 may be suitably sized and cut for use in a picture frame.

[0047] As an optional feature, the page 10 may be provided with a transparent protective leaf (not shown) pivotally joined similarly to the leaves 12, 14, 16 and overlying the top leaf 14. The user would fold this leaf back over to cover the top leaf 14 to user's finished product. This protective leaf would preferably have essentially the same size and external peripheral shape as the other leaves so that full protective coverage is provided. As a beneficial, but optimal feature, one or more of the free edges of the protective leaf would have adhesive provided thereon for securing the protective leaf over the top leaf 14. The adhesive may be covered by a release liner that is peeled back to expose the adhesive for adherence to the top leaf. Preferably, the adhesive would be provided as such along all the free edges either continuously or in spaced apart applications. Of course, the adhesive could be provided as such on the top surface of the front leaf instead of on the inner surface of the protective leaf.

[0048] Further, it should be understood that the multi-leaf page 10 may have any suitable pre-cut window arrangement other than what is illustrated. For example, the multi-leaf page 10 may have any suitable number of aligned windows in the top and intermediate leaves. Also, the multi-leaf page 10 may have any suitable number of additional windows in the top leaf. Moreover, the pre-cut windows may have any suitable size and configuration.

[0049] It can thus be appreciated that the aspects of the present invention have been fully and effectively accomplished. The foregoing specific embodiments have been provided to illustrate the structural and functional principles of the present invention and are not intended to be limiting. To the contrary, the present invention is intended to encompass all modifications, alterations, and substitutions within the spirit and scope of the appended claims.